

ROEHRIG BIPLANE IS NEARLY READY FOR ITS FIRST TRYOUT

Machine to Be Taken to Imperial Beach Aviation Field
Next Week.

WALSH SHIP A SUCCESS

Makes Several Flights From
Grounds Laid Out at Lower
End of the Bay.

B. F. Roehrig, who is building a biplane in the shops of the Baker Machine company at the foot of F street, announced yesterday that he will be ready early next week to move his machine to the aviation camp at Imperial Beach, which was established more than a week ago by C. F. Walsh, the local aviator, who recently completed the construction of an aeroplane after the model of the Curtiss biplane exhibited here by C. K. Hamilton.

The partial success of the Walsh biplane has created a furore among residents of the beautiful beach resort, and many visitors from the city are about the aviation camp daily. E. W. Peterson, upon whose invitation the aviators established themselves at Imperial Beach, has graded three starting tracks for their use, each of them 30 feet wide by about 600 feet long. Hundreds of acres back of the beach settlement are under cultivation and are free from obstructions of every character, providing an ideal locality for the aviators to test their machines without fear of injury to themselves or the biplanes.

Will Be Further Improved

Under the direction of Roehrig the starting grounds will be further improved. He has engaged a man to increase the width of one of the graded tracks to 100 feet. His machine is much larger than the Walsh biplane, and the increased width of the starting track will further insure him against accident.

A representative of The Union visited the camp yesterday, accompanied by Roehrig, and found Walsh and his assistant at the hangar busily engaged in preparing the aeroplane for further flights. Several short flights at low altitudes have already been made, and the machine has behaved well under the hand of the driver. In size and general appearance it is an exact duplicate of the Herring-Curtiss biplane which won the international speed trophy at the Rheims meet last summer. However, there are many details in the construction of the machine which differ widely from the Curtiss champion. A notable innovation, and one that is claimed by the inventor to greatly improve the machine, is the almost entirely new method of control. Walsh has eliminated the movable seat used on the Curtiss machine to control the side balancing planes, substituting a wire connection with each side of the steering pole which controls the front elevating plane.

Machine Easy to Control

Instead of having the pole move only forward and backward, as on the Curtiss machine, the supporting post is set on a double hinge at the base, allowing it to be moved to either side. In this manner, the entire control of the planes and steering gear is centered in the wheel directly in front of the aviator. The engine shut-off and the starting wheel brake are controlled by a single lever fastened directly over the left side of the foot rest, the same motion of the foot manipulating both mechanisms. The engine speed lever is attached to the frame at the side of the driver's seat the same as on the Curtiss machine. With these changes it is argued the handling of the biplane is greatly simplified.

A new thrust bearing will be installed on the propeller shaft of the machine today, and it is expected that Walsh will resume his experimental flights this afternoon.